FINAL RECOMMENDATION

January 24, 2001

Recommendation of the Action Plan Team: Leadership and Communications

(Page 26 of the Action Plan)   **Recommendation #92**

Summary: (verbatim from the Action Plan)

"The USFA shall take advantage of its own organizational development staff to conduct and facilitate staff development activities   (e.g., team building, effective project management, etc.").

Recommendations: **Time Frame:**

The Leadership & Communications Team recommends that external sources be used for organizational development activities (interventions).

The Leadership & Communications Team recommends that senior management consider the use of USFA staff members when there is a need for training and/or staff development that is non-intervention related.

Background:

Organizational development (OD) is different than staff development or training. OD is typically characterized as an intervention (set of steps and processes) whereby a process leader or facilitator recommends a change strategy and subsequently works with the organization as a process guide. Team building, strategic planning, decision making processes, are examples of OD type activities.

The Leadership & Communications team was in consensus that USFA has a number of staff possessing the skill sets to serve as OD (internal) consultants. However, interventions or OD situations have the most optimal outcome when the process leader has high credibility. Typically internal consultants always have credibility issues (rightly or wrongly) in any organization as the participants use pre-existing filters or lenses in viewing the process leader. External consultants typically enter an OD situation without these pre-existing characterizations. The value of this is normally worth the price paid for the external consultant. Therefore, the Leadership & Communications team disagrees with Recommendation #92 as stated.

However the team certainly recognizes the value of USFA staff providing training and other staff development especially when staff voluntarily offers their services

and a need exists. This has occurred previously in numerous instances (e.g. Ms. Laura Chevalier conducting computer hardware and software training) and should continue.

Budget Impact:

The need for external sources is dependent on a *case-by-case* basis for organizational assistance. However, if senior management would decide to conduct a regular organizational development activity (e.g. annual senior staff retreat) a recurring amount could be projected and budgeted for. Fees for this type of organizational development assistance from qualified providers typically range from $1500-3000 per diem (or more) plus planning and post-intervention costs (if any).

Regarding costs for the second recommendation, these would be minimal to USFA, and may even result in a cost savings. There will be some impact on the staff member's time to plan for and present the training.

Conclusions:

OD interventions are a necessary process element for most organizations. The complexity of the culture warrants the use of external process facilitators and experts who have credibility and are typically without bias. When considering staff development and other forms of training, USFA should continue to take advantage of its human resources wherever possible.

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